

(Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1933), 62, 64.

⁵⁴ T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land and Other Writings* (New York: Modern Library, 2001), 185.

⁵⁵ Czesław Miłosz, "The Rebirth of Utopia: Herbert Marcuse," in Czesław Miłosz, *Visions from San Francisco Bay* (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1982), 185.

⁵⁶ Miłosz, Nobel Lecture.

⁵⁷ T. S. Eliot, "Little Gidding," iii; quoted in Scott, "The Social Critic and His Discontents." 70.

⁵⁸ Miłosz, "In Warsaw," *New and Collected Poems*, 76.

⁵⁹ Lydia Dittler Schulman, *Paradise Lost and the Rise of the American Republic* (Boston: Northeastern Univ. Press, 1992). Cf. Armand Himy, "Paradise Lost as a republican 'tractatus theologico-politicus'," in *Milton and Republicanism*, ed. David Armitage, Armand Himy, and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1995), 118 f.

⁶⁰ Peter Dale Scott, "Czesław Miłosz and Solidarity; or, Poetry and the Liberation of a People," *Brick* 78 (Winter 2006), 67–74. An extract from a poem by Miłosz, "You Who Wronged," is inscribed on the Solidarity monument in Gdańsk.

⁶¹ Bruno Snell, *The Discovery of the Mind: In Greek Philosophy and Literature* trans. by T. G. Rosenmeyer (New York: Dover, 1982).

⁶² Snell, *The Discovery of the Mind*, 281, 301.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 299.

BOOKS

Poland in the Irish Nationalist Imagination, 1772–1922: Anti-Colonialism within Europe, by Róisín Healy. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2017. viii + 321 pages. Index, bibliography. ISBN 978-3-319-43430-8. Hardcover. \$79.96 on Amazon.

A scholarly survey of Irish attitudes toward Polish struggles for independence since the partitions in the eighteenth century. It is clear that the author's knowledge of Polish affairs is limited; she is primarily an expert on Ireland. However, she judiciously uses the information she possesses and does not overgeneralize on the basis of limited knowledge.

Healy begins with analyzing attitudes toward the Polish cause in nineteenth-century Europe. She rightly points out that the majority of Polish emigres lived in France rather than Ireland.

However, the Irish perceived many similarities between their own situation in the British Empire and the numerous Polish risings that were met with sympathy (tea and sympathy, one would like to add) in Western Europe. She pays strong attention to the November 1830 Rising in Poland and compares it to the Young Ireland movement. The January 1863 Rising and its disastrous consequences for Polish social and cultural life are then juxtaposed with the Home Rule Bills and Minorities Policy in the British Empire up to the First World War. The book concludes with the achievement of statehood in both Poland and Ireland.

While there is little to disagree with in the book, two issues require clarification. Professor Healy sees the Russian Empire as somewhat similar to the British. While all empires share certain features, the differences here are significant. I subscribe to the view that the Russian Empire's political and social culture substantially derives from that of the Mongols rather than being European in origin. Hence for a country like Poland—as well as Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Georgia—Russian bondage was both alien and immeasurably destructive. Most Western Europeans remain blind to the deep non-European roots of Russia's culture and/or consider them a nonproblem. After all, anthropologically speaking, Russians look pretty much like their European neighbors to the west. This misleading biological similarity hides deep psychological differences. The second issue concerns the minorities of whom prepartitioned Poland had a good number. It does not take much political savvy to realize that during the partitions of Poland, the occupying powers (Russia, Prussia, and Austria) did everything they could to turn the minorities against the majority Polish population, and vice versa. Catherine the Great issued an order about the Pale of Settlement that expelled Jews from the properly Russian parts of the Empire into Polish territory. One can imagine how the high density of the Jewish population and competition for jobs influenced Polish-Jewish relations. Austria did its best to cultivate the attitude of alienation from the Poles in Ruthenian peasantry: it is largely to Austrians that Ukrainians owe their

modern sense of nationhood. Bismarckian Prussia did its best to uproot Catholicism and denationalize Polish peasantry; it partially succeeded. Had the partitions of Poland not taken place, Poland might have remained the largest European country and its republican tradition might have accommodated the Ukrainian and Belarusian nations. Healy does not make note of these aspects of the Polish struggle for independence. (SB)

Józef Maria Ruszar, *Czerwone pająki [Red Spiders]*. Edited by Kamil Dworaczek and Jacek Jędrysiak. Warsaw: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej (www.ksiegarnia.ipn.gov.pl), 2017. 275 pages. Bibliography, footnotes, index, photographs. ISBN 978-83-8098-126-3. Zł. 20 plus postage.

Every book is *sui generis*, or should be—otherwise it is not worth reading. Ruszar’s book fulfills this condition splendidly. On the surface it is a diary/memoir of the author’s service in the army in Soviet-occupied Poland in the 1970s, but in fact it is an analysis of the Soviet ways of destroying human persons by making them go through a physical and psychological “meat grinder” from which they emerge dripping with vulgarity, bad health, hatred of their superiors, and a destroyed religious identity. The diary is replete with the none-too-elegant vocabulary used in the army, and with inserts of poetry and reflective passages that signal to the reader the civilized author’s presence. The title refers to the omnipresent *politruks*, or political indoctrinators assigned to each military unit. They see to it that soldiers do not veer too far from Soviet Marxist principles. An interesting episode of placing a Christmas tree in the common room is described: of course no mention of the tree, let alone of Christmas, was allowed, and it was only after the last *politruk* left for the day that the tree was set up. Yet in spite of savage attempts to stop it, the Christmas spirit makes its appearance, if only for one day, among the brutalized and hungry soldiers. In the 1970s in Soviet-occupied Poland the Church was the only institution that allowed one to escape communist slavery, if only for a short while. The fanatical hatred of Christianity among the Soviet-

educated Marxist teachers was on display day and night. One might add it has survived in those *politruks* who, unpunished, are now enjoying their retirement pensions in inconspicuous Polish towns and villages.

Daily life in the communist army is described in heartbreaking detail. The army, the author says, is chaos. It is also torture and an excellent way to shorten the lives of the recruits by exposing them to the elements without proper clothing; feeding them nutrition-free food; and allowing, indeed encouraging, drunkenness. The narrator rightly remarks that there is a shortage of books containing firsthand experience of soldiers under Soviet communism. He is perhaps one of the few who have the verbal skills and experience to tell the world about this little known aspect of the Soviet system.

Parallel to the horrific story of army recruits in Soviet-occupied Poland is the story of the spiritual development that occurs in spite of, or perhaps because of, these circumstances. The author realizes that the main goal of totalitarian systems is to deprive one of trust in other human beings—not human beings as a group, but individual persons, those whom we meet in daily life. He concludes that we have to trust others or else we shall not find God. However, these reflections come later. While he is in the army, Ruszar feels hatred and depression—hatred of those who dehumanize the teenagers who come to the army as recruits, and depression because, in addition to the horrible physical conditions in which the recruits live, there seems to be no way out of the ugliness, greyness, and vulgarity of the barracks. To a reader it soon becomes clear that a major reason for these destructive feelings is the absurdity and brutality of social engineering underway. Here the government has men at their most vulnerable: uneducated, young, ready to absorb whatever comes their way. The soldiers know that the totalitarian indoctrination, to which they are subjected even more than to military training rings false and frequently exposes itself as duplicitous. Yet they absorb it because there is nothing else to absorb—no counterinfluence, no good books, no Bible, no decent people who could serve as role models. So the intended goal may be achieved—